The Book Club of California

VOLUME LXI, NUMBER 4, FALL 1996



Printer's Devil and Devil's Advocate: The Parallel Lives of Harold Berliner TOM NADEAU

A Morris Diary
PETER STANSKY

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Printer's Devil and Devil's Advocate: The Parallel Lives of Harold Berliner



TOM NADEAU, DAILY RECORDER STAFF WRITER

From The Daily Recorder, Vol. 86, No. 109. Used by Permission.

The Daily Recorder, a legal newspaper circulated in Sacramento, California, may seem an odd source for a Book Club of California Quarterly News-Letter article, but the love of fine printing knows no boundaries.

NEVADA CITY—It was late afternoon on a mild spring day and for four, maybe five hours Harold A. Berliner, Jr.—non-pareil lawyer, master printer and gentleman squire of the old school—had been answering non-stop interrogatories about his life and what he'd done with it.

Patiently, he had expanded on the details of his noted legal career, shown examples of the fine books and broadsides he designed and printed on his private press, fielded queries about the *objets d'art* that graced his comfortable home, and, stylish raconteur that he is, had embellished it all with engaging tales of courtroom derring-do and book-lore skulduggery.

It was time to wrap it up.

So, as we walked back from the print shop to the main house at his villa at the end of a picturesque country lane, I popped my summing-up question: "Why, when you already have everything life could possibly offer, why do you spend so much of yourself trying to make fine books?"

Berliner stopped dead in his tracks. His back was to me and his hand was halted in mid-reach for the knob on the back door to the white clapboard manse. He was thinking.

I suddenly placed him as a much younger lawyer similarly caught off guard in some tricky courtroom exchange of long ago. He was standing stock still in front of an impatient judge, buying time, composing in his head a cautious, lawyerly answer—one that would be taken for probably the truth, yet wouldn't give too much away to the other side.

After a moment, in an oddly distant voice, he broke the silence.

"I do what I do for the same reason you do what you do," he said,

"because I want to make something of lasting artistic quality...something of permanent value."

A few hours before, Berliner had pulled an ancient volume down from a high shelf in his book-lined library. "This is what they call 'incunabula,'" he said. "That's a book printed before 1500. I found it in a little London book shop."

The book he held was an illuminated pharmacopoeia printed in 1497. It set out how-to recipes in Latin for home cure-alls concocted from plants, herbs, bones, and stones. Though nearly five hundred years old, it was still beautiful. Its ink was still black, its foil trim still golden. Its colored wood blocks depicting churls beheading chickens were still vibrant. There was no way of knowing how many alchemists had owned this tome down through the ages, nor under what strange circumstances they had consulted it by candle or firelight. But there it was, a thing of lasting artistic quality preserved from the depredations of time and all its possessors by nothing more than its own fineness. And somewhere in this cheesy insight lurks, I suppose, a metaphor for characters like Harold Berliner.

From a California family that arrived during the Gold Rush, Berliner grew up in San Francisco, where he was administered a vigorous Catholic-school education that carried him after high school to Notre Dame. There, being uncommonly bright, he managed to squeeze college *and* law school into four years.

"I skipped two years of undergraduate [work] and talked my way into law school, which I finished in two years by going to summer school," Berliner said. "The only degree I have is a law degree, and I got it at twenty-two."

But law wasn't necessarily the career he pined for. A high school summer job had opened other vistas to him.

"I worked for the Elmer Paper Company in Sacramento, delivering paper—rolls and rolls, reams and reams of it—to the printers downtown," he said. "While delivering the paper, I became fascinated by the machinery, all the whirring and cogs and wheels going around."

Curious and energetic, Berliner applied himself to learning the printer's trade, not as an apprentice, but as a hands-on autodidact who observed the masterworks of skilled printers and tried to emulate them. By the time he reached Notre Dame, he had acquired his own printing press.

"I printed my first book in college. It wasn't really a book, though. It was the miracle play, *Mother of All*," Berliner said. "You know what a

miracle play is. It's the kind performed in the Middle Ages, often depicting a miracle or some holy act. They would put the whole show on the back of a wagon and drag it around the provinces."

After graduating from law school, Berliner settled in Nevada City, a town he had gotten to know and like when his parents packed him off to Mount St. Mary's School in nearby Grass Valley for his eighth grade school year.

Once snugly installed in the town the gold miners had called "the Queen of the Northern Mines," Berliner opened his first monotype press operation.

The golden age of monotype (defined by Berliner as "the casting of hot metal type as individual characters that assemble themselves on a line for machine printing") was relatively brief, according to Albert Sperisen, librarian of The Book Club of California, a donnish San Francisco institution established in 1912.

"It went from the 1920s to the '30s. The Depression killed it," Sperisen said. "It stayed dead until the '40s, when it started to come back."

During that monotype heyday, printers looked upon San Francisco as a virtual Versailles of fine presses. Somewhere between fourteen and twenty quality print shops ringed the bay's margin, Sperisen estimated.

So, when Berliner opened his press in Nevada City in 1945, he began what would turn out to be a lifetime mission.

With advancing technology, the "hot" metal type gave way to the cheaper "cold" photo type, and the quality monotype operations began to fold, one after the other. Berliner began rescuing the old presses, type fonts, and matrixes that were being chucked out wholesale.

Berliner even built his own type foundry, which was the last working type foundry in the United States until he suspended its operation, due in large part to the disappearance of skilled help and printers able to use hot type.

Today, "The Private Press of Harold Berliner" is located in a twostory facility that shelters more than two dozen fully operational printing presses—proof presses, platen presses, cylinder presses, linotype presses—and the most complete collection of usable metal type fonts and type matrixes in the Americas.

"I hope you mention that Harold Berliner is one of the three founders of the ATF. That's the American Typecasters Fellowship," said Bruce Washbish, owner of the Anchor & Acorn Press in Petaluma.

"They started it together about twenty years ago, specifically to

preserve the monotype printing tradition in the U.S. It was a craft that, like steam locomotives and steamships and sailing ships, pretty much disappeared," Washbish said. "Harold Berliner deserves a lot of the credit for saving it."

But we're getting ahead of ourselves here.

Back in the 1940s and early 1950s when Berliner was honing his skills as a printer, his family was getting antsy. After all, wasn't he an intelligent young man? Hadn't he gotten a sterling education? Didn't he have a law degree hanging on his wall? What was he doing? What was he thinking?

"I had promised my mother I'd take the bar examination, and I did, only it wasn't until six years after I got my degree," he said. "By then I'd forgotten everything I'd learned in law school—every law, every rule, every word, every syllable."

Luckily, in those days the now-legendary Bernard Witkin offered a six-week cram course for taking the bar, and Berliner wangled a way to take it.

"Bernie Witkin had worked out his own way of teaching, and he followed it exactly," Berliner said, his face then wrinkling into a smile. "He didn't like answering questions. A few tried to ask him questions, but he stopped them. He told them, 'Don't ask questions. Just listen to me and do it exactly as I say. Do that, and you'll pass the bar. Don't do what I said, and you won't pass. It's that simple.'"

Berliner apparently paid attention to that advice. The avowed printer who had forgotten everything he knew about the law passed the bar exam on his first try and was admitted to the California bar in 1951. That year he hung out his shingle in downtown Nevada City.

It is important to note here that when Berliner opened his practice in Nevada City, it was not then the tourist mecca it has since become. Rather it was an isolated, economically depressed mountain hamlet noted primarily for two things: Its Gold Rush history and its talented eccentrics.

Many of the shops on Nevada City's main drag were boarded up, and most of the epic hard-rock mines that pocked the surrounding country side—the "Empire," the "Idaho Maryland," the "North Star," and the mighty "WYOD" (which means "Work Your Own Diggins")—were closed.

The town's many colorful eccentrics, who were generally of the rich and/or talented kind, therefore became its most valuable asset. Among these notables were microwave mogul Charles Litton, California artists Richard Hackett and George Mathis, commercial designers David Osborne and Charles Woods, bank fortune heir Alf Heller, poet Gary Snyder, Gump's metalsmith Hans Gragg, and children's author Grace Skarr, to mention just a few.

"And Harold was one of them," added Ed Tyson, chief librarian of the Nevada County Historical Society.

As his law practice sprouted, his reputation as a shrewd attorney grew; yet still, whenever his name was mentioned, the footnote that he was also a printer was seldom neglected. But his blossoming legal career was soon to overshadow his printing avocation.

When the incumbent Nevada County district attorney departed for a seat on the bench in 1957, the board of supervisors appointed Berliner to the post. His tenure in that office, which lasted until 1973, would bring him statewide fame as an anti-fraud crusader and make him possibly the most quoted author in America.

Berliner's best-known case as a district attorney was, undoubtedly, the mammoth Boise Cascade land-fraud case, which took years to prosecute, captured headlines, revealed major land-planning dodges, and brought to heel one of the state's largest and wealthiest corporations.

The big timber company of Boise Cascade owned a giant swatch of Nevada County land and split it into many smaller sections which it further subdivided into even smaller parcels. These it marketed to Bay Area and Southern California residents as terrific retirement investments that could be paid for by breaking off even tinier lots for profitable resale to other investors.

Endless chains of purchase and subdivision, sales and resales, turned a relatively coherent county map into a spilled-puzzle nightmare of teensy islanded parcels lacking road access and utility rights-of-way, clouded titles, occasional bankruptcies, and a host of fundamental planning problems that Nevada County is still struggling with to this day.

"But Harold is extremely intelligent, you know, and had an incredible talent for quickly grasping complex business deals and reducing them to simple terms a jury could easily understand," said Nevada County Superior Court Judge John Darlington, who was briefly a deputy DA to Berliner and who, himself, successfully prosecuted a similar but smaller version of the same land-sales scam in Alta Sierra.

When Berliner filed criminal charges, Boise Cascade, in a display of corporate gunboat diplomacy, deployed a flotilla of Big City barristers to rustic Nevada County with the notion of quelling the bumpkin natives with a show of legal force. They hadn't reckoned with Harold Berliner.

"To give you an idea of what he was like in the courtroom—one day during the trial Harold became convinced that one of the lawyers on the other side was sneaking looks over his shoulder and cribbing his notes," Darlington said. "So Harold started writing all his notes in Greek—I saw it myself."

Boise Cascade ended up settling, with Berliner negotiating a \$58 million payment to the County of Nevada in recompense for the parcelmap mess the corporation had created.

"Later, after I was out of office and there was no possible conflict, Boise asked me if I would consult with them. I guess they were following LBJ's advice," a chuckling Berliner said. "Once, when some people asked LBJ why he didn't fire the powerful J. Edgar Hoover, he told them, 'Because I'd rather have him inside the tent pissing out, than have him outside the tent pissing in.'"

It was also during his tenure as DA that Berliner took on the writing job that may have made him the most quoted author in America.

"With Doris Maier, then assistant [state] attorney general, I wrote the Miranda Warning all the cops use today," Berliner said. "Tom Lynch was the attorney general and I was a DA. He was looking for someone to write a simple statement the cops could remember. Someone had to write it, and I said, 'Hey, I want to be part of that.'"

One steady job The Private Press of Harold Berliner still does each year is print Miranda Warning cards and evidence bags (yes, just like the see-through plastic baggies the bloody O.J. gloves were once in) for smaller police departments around the United States.

But Berliner's serious press work remains high-quality books, broadsides, and maps. So far he has printed fifteen limited editions of classic books. Among these are *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens, illustrated by the renowned Wolfgang Lederer; *The Power Within Us* by Cabeza de Vaca, with an introduction by Henry Miller and also illustrated by Lederer, and *May All Creatures Live*, poems by Daniel Berrigan.

"He's out of prison and writing again," Berliner said of his friend Berrigan. "I'll be doing another group of poems for him soon. He wants them on single sheets. He gives them out to friends," he added.

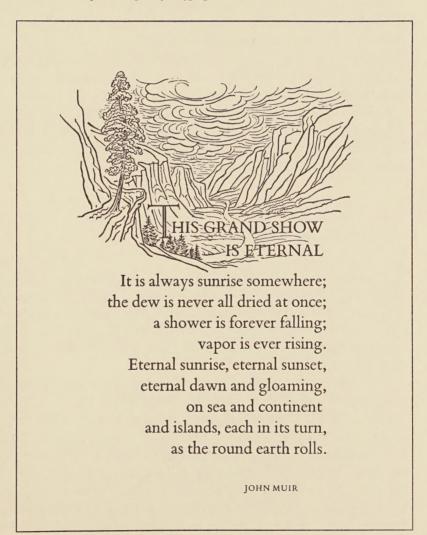
His printed books come in editions of, typically, seven hundred and fifty copies and sell for up to \$100. His broadsides are fine art "posters" that generally feature a large illustration—a cougar, for instance—as with the "Memo to a Mountain Lion," written by California novelist Wallace Stegner. Lederer has also illustrated Berliner broadsides such as "The Prayer of St. Francis."

Berliner's broadsides and antique maps reproducing the charts of California used by the Spanish, and old engravings of Nevada City, among many others, are works of highly prized cartographic art.

And how close has Harold Berliner come to creating the things of "lasting artistic quality" he aspires to? Very close, according to the judgments of his printing peers and knowledgeable bookmen.

"Harold has exquisite taste, and the books he produces are elegant in design and production. There is one little book he's done I particularly like. It's about fly-fishing," Sperisen said. "He's scheduled to do another

Harold Berliner poster designed by Wolfgang Lederer



one for us [at The Book Club of California] as soon as an appropriate manuscript presents itself."

Washbish—who, like most good printers and writers and artists, is pretty darn frugal with praise for his competitors—said Berliner ranks easily among the top fine printers working today.

"His work is always elegant and finely done. Oh, there may be design elements I could quibble with, but I could say that about anyone's work," Washbish said. "The fact is Harold Berliner has done it. Many try, but, dammit, Harold has done it."

Berliner and his wife, Mary Ann, have eight children, one of whom, Judith B. French, is following in her father's footsteps with her own Full Circle Press, which she operates out of the sprawling print shop at the end of that country lane outside Nevada City.

When he isn't travelling twice a year to England and Europe (where his works are also collected by lovers of finely made books) he continues plotting printing projects, and, oh yes, carries on his law practice.

"I'm doing class action suits. I'm suing *Reader's Digest*. You've probably heard of their Publishers' Clearinghouse?" Berliner said. "Well, that's a lottery, and I think it's illegal. The suit's been in federal court for three years now. It takes time, but we'll do it."

A Morris Diary

PETER STANSKY

THE NUMBER AND VARIETY of the events of the year marking the hundredth anniversary of William Morris's death defy description; there is a danger of being overwhelmed. It would be virtually impossible to attend all of the events listed by the William Morris Society, and then there turn out to be quite a few occasions that do not make that extensive list.

Additionally, the number of associated products was overwhelming and slightly off-putting. One wondered what Morris would have thought. Most of them are in unrelenting good taste; there was a full range of them in the Victoria & Albert Museum shop even before its major exhibition opened. One was a chocolate bar with William Morris's signature on its wrapper. Liberty of London appropriately has introduced a whole range of Morris products: Ties, coasters, cups, china, all sorts of goods in paper. Included for sale at the V & A was the Bodley's Library contribution: Tiles for each letter of the alphabet done in

Kelmscott Press style. Past Times shops have sprung up all over Britain, and "Morris" is a category of its own, on a par with Victorian and Medieval. Some of these items are in quite garish and untrue colors, but the coffee mugs based on Morris calligraphy and the CD of the music Arnold Dolmetsch played for him while he was dying have a certain appeal. The Tory government has put in one of the few discordant notes; it decided not to issue a commemorative stamp. The Post Office issued a statement that "the view of the committee that makes the decision was that William Morris was not of sufficient stature." The decision certainly validates Morris's views of the bourgeois world.

The first two events I attended were not even on the Society's list, and fate would have it they took place at the same time. On April 18, Fiona MacCarthy, the biographer of Morris (who has made and will continue to make numerous contributions to the year both in print and in person), gave a talk to the Art Libraries Society at the Tate. I then dashed to a meeting of the Society of Antiquaries, the owner of Morris's copyrights and of Kelmscott Manor. There there was a series of short talks, four of which concentrated on the Society's connection with Morris. The first was a charming, if sad, account by David Saxby, of the Museum of London, of his archaeological excavation of the site of Morris's Works at Merton, where virtually nothing remains and most of the land is dedicated to a branch of Savacentre. A charming publication on the "dig" and Morris in Merton is available for purchase (at £3.95) from the Museum of London. The other talks by members of the Society concerned Morris's election to the Society in 1894. Apparently he attended only one meeting, although he did lend some of his manuscripts to an exhibition. Most interesting—plans were distributed—was a discussion of the now-achieved new landscaping for Kelmscott Manor. There was another talk on the Society's acquisition of the tools used for the binding of the Chaucer. The occasion was quite delightful and intriguing.

No doubt the most important event of the Morris year is the exhibition at the Victoria & Albert, which opened to the public on Thursday, May 9, 1996. The private view was the previous Tuesday, when Princess Alexandra of Kent performed the honors. One is not sure what Morris would have thought of all the products based on his designs that are being sold at the museum and elsewhere, but there is no question that he would have spun in his grave at the thought of a member of the Royal Family, which he hated, doing the official opening. Perhaps it would have pleased him that the rest of the invited guests—no doubt including many members of the "swinish rich"—were made to wait while the Princess saw the exhibit on her own. But as Fiona MacCarthy commented, at least when she returned to the museum on Thursday the space was full of school children.

The decorative Morris is in the ascendancy at this exhibition, with politics and literature restricted to one bay each. More than thirty wonderful items from the collection of Book Club members Sanford and Helen Berger were in evidence, most strikingly in the Kelmscott Press section. One has some sense of Morris having been co-opted by the Establishment; his glorious rage at his age and at the world that is honoring him is not much in evidence. Perhaps ideas and politics are the most difficult of concepts to present in a museum, particularly a museum which is perhaps the greatest in the world devoted to the decorative arts. Marina Vaizey, the eminent London art critic, has kindly consented to incorporate here her views.

"The problems with the design of the exhibition (rather than the material chosen) is several fold. Our very first view is a pretty and pretty bucolic, seemingly interminable, multi-screen video introducing his early life, which has a slightly saccharine commentary that can be heard throughout the first section endlessly repeating. One fascinating video does show modern craftsmen working in the Morris manner, printing Morris wallpapers from woodblocks etc., with a good explanation of the technical processes.

"And while the objects chosen are of course appropriate, the ways in

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which we see them are not: Many drawings are hung far too high. Labels are both obtrusive and hard to read, the books and many of the drawings, pamphlets, and so on are actually very hard to see indeed. The wondrous carpets are almost impossible to see whole, but the tapestries are very well displayed; not so, almost all the wallpapers, which are displayed through samples and rather large fragments, so that we cannot grasp how they would look actually in a room. Yet paradoxically the overdone use of photopanels provides too much scene-setting of a rather obvious kind.

"The V&A lost some years ago to the permanent Japanese gallery its very large exhibition room, and the current large space is carved out of the old restaurant and old touring exhibition display space; so we have to cross corridors, and cannot seamlessly walk round. We are never sufficiently embraced by Morris, nor do we see sufficiently what he reacted against: Perhaps it would have been a coup to have entered the exhibition through a stultifying, overdone, hot-house Victorian interior.

"The very large shop is itself quite noisy, albeit at the very end of the exhibition, and filled with a number of kitsch and expensive souvenirs, Morris pastiche rather than reproduction: The inevitable mugs, jigsaw puzzles, tea towels. There is, however, a good selection of books, including five or six volumes from the new William Morris library.

"There is an overwhelming impression given of Morris' invention, energy, determination, and the sense too that he was so to speak fighting on all fronts, and perfectly aware of the ways in which his ideals were continually compromised; but he did not give up. What we do not sense sufficiently is the sheer complexity of his visual intelligence, and his political attitude."

On Saturday May 11 the William Morris Society had its annual meeting, and in its way it reflected one of the problems of the exhibition: Some members complained that the political Morris was being comparatively ignored in the course of the year while others felt there was quite enough politics. The future of Morris houses was the dominant concern as the long-term tenants of Kelmscott House, the Christopher Hamptons (he the playwright and screenwriter and producer of Carrington), are selling their lease, and the question of whether the Society should attempt to reclaim the house or to let it go (while keeping its rooms, as before) with more financial gain, on another long term lease. At the end of the meeting there was a talk by Edward Hollamby, the owner and savior of Red House, about its future and the need to raise a great deal of money to secure it. The Morris legacy, in two of its most tangible forms, is far from settled.

On May 22, on a cold and rainy Spring day, I went to a small exhibition, William Morris Revisited: Questioning the Legacy, at the Crafts Council in London (it had been at the Whitworth Art Gallery at the University of Manchester and after London it will be at Birmingham.) There are beautiful objects in the exhibition and a handsome catalogue. That the craft tradition continues is evident here and elsewhere around London and the rest of Britain. But the exhibition seems to have a rather cranky attitude towards Morris. One should not automatically think well of Morris nor assume that his influence has been perfect. The decorative aspect of Morris has dominated in the exhibitions I've seen so far. If there had been some more attention to politics, perhaps a better understanding of Morris would have been achieved.

The exhibition makes the valid, up to a point, and often-made charge against Morris that he only worked for the rich, and that he used machines when it suited him. The suggestion is that he helped create a cult or indeed a fetish of the handmade. I don't think Morris is given enough credit for being aware of the ambiguities of what he was doing. It was only in a socialist state, he felt, that art could fully realize itself. Then there would no longer be the contradictions of which this exhibit is fully, one might almost say excessively, aware. The state of politics and class, rather than Morris's thought and action, meant that his vision has not yet been achieved.

The exhibition includes, among other objects, a beautiful Webb glass and a full case of magnificent Christopher Dresser pieces as well as some very handsome modern objects. There are some rather off-putting amateur pieces, mostly turn of the century, done by middle class ladies. The exhibit can't be right that Morris was to blame for them. The concluding statement on the wall reads: "William Morris and other Arts and Crafts theorists frequently talked about the unity of art. They invoked the Middle Ages when all craftsmen had been artists, or vice versa, and sought to abolish the hierarchy which they believed had elevated the fine arts above the applied. But did the Movement's anti-industrial and anti-commercial attitudes cut if off ultimately from the domestic? Is it not art, rather than craft, which has triumphed?" One feels that the organizers are not quite brave enough to say that they think that Morris was a "bad thing." The exhibition does achieve the object of making one think.

On May 29 on a blustery day I visited Kelmscott Manor and the profoundly handsome grave designed by Philip Webb. Unfortunately it was perhaps the most crowded day in the house's history—more than four hundred fifty visitors—and the weather was such that somehow it was both hot and cold. If the crowd had been smaller, the house would have seemed as lovely as ever. The new landscaping is still asserting itself, but will be successful, and the Society of Antiquaries' posterboards on the history of the house, on display in the barn, were highly effective.

The end of June was marked by conferences, both excellent. On June 21, 22, and 23 at the V&A itself, there was a series of talks to an interested and informed but not particularly participatory audience. I was able to attend only the first two days, but missed the third, devoted to Morris the educator. This included a talk by Norman Kelvin, who has just triumphantly completed his edition of the letters, and who also was a plenary speaker at the next Conference and is giving the annual Kelmscott Lecture.

The first day was on the designer, including a meticulous address on Red Lion Square and Red House by Douglas Schoenherr, one of the organizers of the great Canadian exhibition on Morris of a few years ago; Clive Wainwright on furniture, which, not unexpectedly, was more on A.W. Pugin than Morris, and making Morris less of an innovator than one might have thought; Peter Cormack on stained glass; Jon Press, coauthor of the splendid book on Morris as highly successful businessman, on the Firm's execution of the decoration of 1 Holland Park for the

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Ionides family; and Gillian Naylor on the rather depressing history of the Firm after Morris's death.

The next day was more free-wheeling, with a contemporary potter, Michael Casson, on the workshop ethic at his pottery; Jan Marsh on the strengths and weaknesses of Morris's position on gender, with a plea for more degendering; James Joll on the exhibition and its implications; and David Crowley on Morris in Eastern Europe. Then in conclusion came a positively show-stopping, rousing speech, legitimately building on Morris, by Tony Benn, the far-left Labour leader, reminding us of the strength of Morris's political position and how important it is in light of our present discontents.

The conference in Oxford the following weekend was much more a standard such event with innumerable papers and three plenary addresses, slightly over-dominated by American professors of English: By Norman Kelvin, Florence Boos, and William Peterson. They all gave fine lectures even though the ventilation system failed during Florence Boos's, rather ironic considering that she was lecturing on the environment. But the excitement was in having more than one hundred fifty individuals, professional and amateur, from all over the world, gathered together by their interest in Morris. They were happy to listen to the sixty or so papers but perhaps even more pleased to talk to one another about Morris. The variety of topics was so great that it would be virtually impossible to deduce any "trends" in Morris studies. That multiple man naturally lends himself to a fascinating variety of approaches. And it was particularly pleasing that my own involvement with three months of the Morris year should end at Exeter College, where Morris had been a student. His experiences at Oxford as an undergraduate and later are emblematic of so much in his life. He adored Oxford and yet he was in a state of continual fury with what was happening there during his lifetime in the name of progress. Not at the conference, but in quite a few of those aspects of the Morris year which I experienced, his political rage was undercut, and we were presented a little too much with a rather anodyne "heritage" figure. But I was able to sample only a small, though significant, number of the innumerable events in Britain and elsewhere marking the comparatively early death—at the age of sixty-two—of one of the world's greatest figures.

Peter Stansky is a Director of The Book Club. He had an opportunity to attend William Morris events in England this past Spring while teaching at Stanford University's program in Oxford.

Gifts & Acquisitions

BARBARA LAND has again found and given the library a most curious and provocative book. The title of this very small, strange book is Dr. Church's "Hoax": The Inventions of a Yankee Genius. This eighty-page book was privately printed in 1976 for the author, Richard E. Huss, a practicing printer, who had The Stinehour Press print five hundred copies for him.

Perhaps because of the word "hoax" in the title of this "vanity press" book, we missed this unusual printing item. Now, thirty years later, we can add this curious piece of "Americana" to our library.

The doctor, William Church, was born in Vermont in 1779. After his education and his finals at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, he practiced medicine for a short, unrecorded period. Then suddenly we read that in 1820, our doctor is in England and now registered as a mechanical engineer. During the years 1822 to 1824, he was granted patents in London for: A mechanical typesetting machine, a printingtype caster, and a flat-bed printing press. These startling patents caused little stir in the printing industry. The outstanding English authorities in printing (most of whom were opposed to any mechanical uses in printing), Hanson, Johnson, and even Timperley, characterized these inventions as "this folly of an American theorist."

The author does little to assess later developments and only slightly mentions James Young and Adrien Delcambre's first successful typesetting machine of 1824. The first book to be produced using mechanical typesetting was The Anatomy of Sleep, or, The Art of Procuring Sound and Refreshing Slumber At Will, by (another doctor) Dr. Edward Binns, London: John Churchill, 1842; The Club owns a copy of this very rare book.

After being snubbed in England, Church returned home—a doctor, but still an incredible mechanical inventor. In 1838, he designed the famous Eclipse locomotive, which hauled coals on the Swansea Vale Railway, the first railway engine to run a mile in a minute.

The book is handsomely illustrated with wonderfully professional mechanical drawings for Church's incredible inventions. Thank you again. Barbara.

Through the goodness of member Maurice Adelman, Jr., of Savannah, Georgia, we have received the incredible five hundredpage book on William Caslon (1693-1766) by Johnson Ball, Principal of Halesowen Technical College, Worcestershire, 1938-1952. This

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welcome gift is the result of a surprise offer of the book if we did not already have it, and we are delighted to shelve it with our material on Caslon and his contemporaries. The book was published in 1973 by The Roundwood Press—and, strangely, it was unknown to us when, as "Young Turks," we conducted our Caslon Symposium in 1975. (see *Two Hundred and Fifty Years Young* in *QN-L*, Vol. XL, No. 3, 197, pages 67-69.)

We recently acquired a real "sleeper" through the missed details of a local bookseller's description. The "find" for us is from a small edition by Paul Elder, titled Lavender and Other Verse, by Edward Robeson Taylor. Not noted: The author was the first president of The Book Club and, shortly before, Mayor of San Francisco (1907-09); and if those two distinctions were not enough, Taylor was physician, lawyer, and poet! Further, the dealer failed to note that this well-printed small book was printed on Italian Fabriano handmade paper in an edition of two hundred thirty copies, two hundred of which were limited and numbered—ours is No. 121—and last, but hardly least, the book was printed for Paul Elder by Stanley Taylor and Co. in 1920. A very happy find for us.

The Club has received an interestingly titled book, Book Collecting as One of the Fine Arts and Other Essays by Club member Colin Franklin, Scolar Press, England, 1996. All of the essays are excellent, and some are great, in this reviewer's opinion. Three of them are the result of Franklin's time spent at the Armstrong Browning Library in Texas. Fortunately, or otherwise, the publisher has printed on the wrapper what appears to us to be an apology for not taking seriously Franklin's title. It reads, in part: "The focus is not restricted to typography or the visual quality of books." This throwaway line appears to excuse the lack of design and visual quality by the famed Scolar Press, whose reputation as a fine printer is a reputation well deserved. Our apology for criticizing a gift book—nonetheless, it will find a happy berth in our fine collection of notable essays on The Book, and we are grateful.



Again and still again we are indebted to Betty Potter for a group of exciting and much-wanted books for The Club...mostly early Grabhorn books except two. The first, a most unusual item, is *A Little Book of Western Verse* by Eugene Field. It is number 107 of two hundred and fifty copies, Chicago, 1889, with a holograph letter by Field dated July 29, 1890. This nicely bound book is in a one-half leather

slipcase. The other, a nice copy to own, is The Gold Rush Album, by our own Joseph Henry Jackson, Editor in Chief, published by Charles Scribner & Sons, New York, 1949.

The following are all Grabhorn books: Francis Drake and Other Early Explorers Along the Pacific Coast, by John W. Robertson, one of one thousand copies, The Grabhorn Press, 1927 (an uncut copy). It is nicely inscribed to Betty's father "From one collector of Californiana to another, John W. Robertson, M.D." Curiously, the colophon reads "1,000 copies of this book have been printed at the Grabhorn Press by Edwin Grabhorn." (Robert Grabhorn was in Paris studying bookbinding.)

California As It Is and As It May Be, or A Guide to the Gold Regions by F. P. Wierzbicki is No. 8 of the Grabhorn Rare Americana series, edited by Douglas S. Watson and with thirteen illustrations by Valenti Angelo. five hundred copies, The Grabhorn Press, 1933. This is a mint copy in its printed dust jacket.

San Francisco Old and New, by Marion Brown and "pictured" by Jean Williamson, one of five hundred copies printed by The Grabhorn Press for Marion Brown and Jean Williamson, November 1939, Our copy is numbered 193.

Around the World in San Francisco by Leonard Austin, with a foreword by Louis Adamic, pictures by Pauline Vinson, and published by James Ladd Delkin, Stanford University, 1940. Printed by The Grabhorn Press, November 1940. This is a fine copy in its original dust jacket.

Many thanks, again, to Betty Lyman Potter for this generous gift.



Once again, we are indebted to our former president Dr. Albert Shumate, who has given us another unusual Grabhorn item titled Go West Young Man, a twelve-page advertisement commissioned by Melba and Frank Bennett and Dorothy and Philip Boyd for their Deep Well Ranch in Palm Springs, 1941-42. Just why this is such a rare Grabhorn item is a mystery; they printed 4,000 copies in two colors, plus a special wrapper for cover. The copy was composed by an amateur, but the Grabhorns helped by decorating it throughout with historical engravings from their noted cut collection. We are indeed happy to include this (unknown to us) item in our collection, and thanks to Dr. Shumate. ALBERT SPERISEN

The Book Club has just bought Frederick A. Bearman's Fine and Historic Bookbinding from the Folger Shakespeare Library, published in 1992, one of the best general surveys of bookbinding since the show

at Baltimore in the 1950s. The Folger's collection is even more remarkable because the books, except for a few gifts to the library, were not acquired for their bindings, but for their content. This book will be the pride and joy of our bookbinding section.



The Club has acquired Folio 21: A Bibliography of the Folio Society. This is one of the nicer such books; its bibliographical information will be of much use to collectors of Folio Society books and others.

BARBARA JANE LAND

Some recent gifts, received with thanks:

From the author, member Noel Peattie, *Hydra & Kraken*, a small book on "the Lore and Lure of Lake-Monsters and Sea-Serpents." Contact the Regent Press, 6020-A Adeline Street, Oakland, CA 94608; telephone (510) 547-7602. Mr. Peattie himself is editor of *Typhooner*, a newsletter for owners of Cape Dory Typhoons, and until recently published the literary journal *Sipapú*

Also a gift from the author, new member David Hardy, *Typographical Commonplace Books*. This is a bibliography of the same, and includes, for example, those produced by Sherwood Grover over the years and the work of J. Oglethorpe MacNooder, otherwise known as Dr. Edmund E. Simpson. Mr. Hardy is interested in more such books and welcomes inquiries at the Sign of the Laughing Frog, 2055 Filbert Street, San Francisco, CA 94123; telephone (415) 563-7904.

We have received *Old Books in the Old World*, by Leona Rostenberg and Madeleine B. Stern. This illustrated volume of reminiscences of book-buying abroad in the 1940s and 1950s may be ordered from Oak Knoll Press, 414 Delaware Street, New Castle, Delaware 19720.

Serendipity

HARLAN KESSEL leaves a hard act to follow. His graceful writing, sense of design, and uncompromising quality have gratified our readers. We will build on this excellence by seeking articles that detail historical background, whether of an author, literary work, or publisher; provide literary criticism of an important body of writings; deal with the book arts—printers and presses, illustrators and illustrations, binding, decoration, publishing, and selling; elucidate collections, collectors, and col-

lecting; and record personal reminiscences of noted personalities related to their professional work. California and the West have unique regional histories, and we invite those with expertise to favor us. Have you read a good book? Send us a review. We are going to produce a lively and enduring publication and will edit and arrange all submissions so as to display the book arts at their finest.

The *Quarterly News-Letter* will also publish news of general interest in the book world and would like to know of happenings, forthcoming lectures, and notable books.

ROBERT J. CHANDLER, CHAIRMAN, ON-L COMMITTEE

With Nicholas Basbanes's A Gentle Madness: Bibliophiles, Bibliomanes and the Eternal Passion for Books going into its fifth printing within nine months, book collecting is HOT! To visualize this concept, Estelle Ellis and Caroline Seebohm have produced a beautifully illustrated folio, At Home with Books: How Booklovers Live With and Care for their Libraries (\$50.). Forty-one European and American (including Californian) collections portray their premise that "book people want their books where they can get to them—which is every where." Co-author Seebohm, once a law student at Oxford, presents a brief for the booklover. "I can cast my eye along the shelf and almost immediately guess that person's career, their background and their interests," she observes. "In England, we do this by accent and dress, because we're trained to understand every nuance of class. In America, we do this with books."



With wry understatement, Seebohm remarks, "It's hard for book lovers to be minimal," adding, "You always accumulate more books." Libraries bring order, and Ellis and Seebohm show the results of alliance between collectors, writers, designers, decorators, and architects. Special sections include helpful hints on everything from shelving and conservation to library ladders and book plates.

Donovan J. McCune's bequest to The Book Club has kept our Treasurer happy for many a year, while his largesse continues to promote the book arts. The McCune 1996 Program on "The Art of the Book" is stimulating and eclectic. Hosted by Vallejo's Kennedy Library at 505 Santa Clara Street (at Georgia), guests assemble six times a year on a Sunday in the first floor McCune Room at 2 o'clock. Already in 1996, Dr. Andrew Jameson has spoken on the Codex Sinaiticus; Dr. Sandor Burstein has explored the mind of Lewis Carroll; and Marsha Evans has displayed the prints of her late husband, Henry, as well as her own creations; on September 29, Jeff Craemer will describe his incomparable printing presses while guests wander among them at the Mt. Tam Press in San Rafael; on October 20, Book Club director Vince Lozito will describe our sister organization, the Sacramento Book Collectors Club; and on November 24, experts Harlan Quinn and Al Newman will exhibit treasures from the collection.

Last year, the Printers' Chappel of Santa Cruz selected forty-eight fanciful contemporary artists' books for a two-year traveling exhibit (Scripps College, U.C. Santa Barbara, and Mills College in California). For it, the Chappel produced a fifty-six-page catalog, *Dressing the Text: The Fine Press Artists' Book*, priced at \$12. Additionally, a double issue of *Quarry West*, No. 32, presents essays on this show and "The Poet as Printer: William Everson" for \$14.95, plus shipping. Collectors may enjoy both for \$24.50, shipping included. [318 Rigg Street, Santa Cruz CA 95060; Peter Thomas, (408)475-1455.]

A new Ambrose Bierce biography is receiving rave reviews. Through literary analysis, Roy Morris, Jr., explains how Bierce's bloody service during the Civil War shaped his life and writings. *Ambrose Bierce: Alone in Bad Company* (\$30) will be a good companion for Dr. Roger Larson's edition of the letters between Bierce and poet George Sterling, a forthcoming Book Club publication.

R. J. C.

One of Richard H. Dillon's ineffable post cards: "I think we run an errata note when we are (very rarely!) in error in the *QN-L*, ¿no es verdad? Bo Wreden caught a glitch in my mini-article on Bill Wreden's

ephemera. Glorious Deeds of Women!, Cat. #57, was actually designed by SF graphic designer Gay Bodick. So there. Aloha, Dick (error prone) Dillon." We wish we were all as careful as Mr. Dillon and as sharp-eyed as Mr. Wreden.

A Fiftieth Anniversary Gathering

FIRST THANKS in this story go to John and Thelma DePol because their fiftieth wedding anniversary was the occasion: Many more years of happiness to them both. We are also grateful to Michael Tarachow and Merce Dostale of the Pentagram Press in Minneapolis, Minnesota, for organizing the printing of keepsakes for the DePols, a many-sided task. And especial thanks to Don and Kathi Fleming of the Press of the Golden Key, who printed not only their own tribute to the DePols but also one in the name of The Book Club. The Club recently received from the proprietors of Pentagram Press the portfolio of all the contributions—and wonderful they are, in all their variety: poems; wood engravings, some by DePol himself, others by his students, others historical but appropriate to the text or the occasion; typographical ornaments; calligraphy; drawings; narratives and reminiscences; photographs....Thanks, Mssrs. Tarachow and Dostale. May 31, 1996, with its "champagne & gift certificate for dinner at a Park Ridge restaurant," as well as the original portfolio, must be a wonderful day in the memory of John and Thelma DePol.



Dates for the next Oak Knoll Fest are October 5 and 6, 1996. For further information on this international fair and sale, contact Esther Fan, Oak Knoll Books, 414 Delaware Street, New Castle, DE 19720; telephone (302) 328-7232, 800-996-2556; fax (302) 328-7274; email: oakknoll@oakknoll.com; http://www.oakknoll.com.

The Reverend William J. Monihan, S.J. 1914-1996

WE ARE SADDENED to report the death, on June 21, of the Reverend William I. Monihan, S.J.

Father Monihan's long and close association with the Gleeson Library of the University of San Francisco, his building of Special Collections there, his institution of the Sir Thomas More Medal for Book Collecting and the annual Symposium are the scaffolding upon which his renown in the international world of books was built. Father Monihan's energy on behalf of the collection at the Gleeson Library was legendary; he was its first librarian, and later became Director of Library Relations. In May of 1993, he was himself the recipient of the Sir Thomas More Medal, and on that occasion paid generous tribute to the many people who had inspired his love of books and contributed to his knowledge over the years.

A long-time member of The Book Club of California, Father Monihan was made an Honorary Member by The Club's Board at its May meeting.

Hear Ye! Robert Hawley's Oyez Press

THE UNDERSIGNED usually reports on additions to The Club library's special collection of fine-printing ephemera. But the latest contribution is a sort of hybrid, an important archive of both books/pamphlets and of ephemera, per se. There are more than three dozen examples of the latter, keepsakes and publication announcements, &c., and five broadsheets, but twenty bona fide books/pamphlets. (We shall have to leave the proper shelving of this gift to the cunning of the Library Committee.)

This newest library accession consists of the "literary remains" of Robert Hawley's Oyez Press. The press is currently dormant. Not dead, perhaps not comatose; but definitely resting.

Hawley is best known to Book Clubbers as a rare book dealer specializing in Western Americana; "our" Bill Reese, as it were. He is, indeed, an expert antiquarian bookseller in the grand tradition of The Club's David Magee and Franklin Gilliam. But the one-time master sergeant (887th Field Artillery, Germany, 1950-52) is also a lapsed poet (if that is not too cruel a term) and a publisher who, over the years, has made worthy contributions not only to publishing and poetry, but also, as a patron, to fine printing.

The word "Oyez," usually fitted out with an exclamation point, comes from the Latin word *audiatis*. It is an Anglo-French term with two slightly different meanings. It is a shouted command of silence in English courts of law, such as London's Old Bailey, a tradition dating back to *circa* 1287. From this legal usage comes the term "Oyer and Terminer," meaning a special commission, or writ, to the King's benches. This empowers judges to hear and determine indictments for such offenses as treason,

felonies, and insurrection. Nowadays, it is the most comprehensive commission granted justices on circuit, directing them to hold court for the trial of offenses.

But Oyez, of course, also has a more general meaning. It is an ancient English call to attention, a "Hear ye!" that was customarily uttered three times over. Early on, the imperative crossed the Atlantic to the Colonies, where it was commonly used by town criers to summon a crowd. Robert Hawley took the name not in order to publish on the law's assizes and chancery, its torts and escheats (such as we find in Jordan Luttrell's catalogs for Meyer Boswell, Books), but to call much-needed attention to new poetry from local poets. Hawley and his partner, Stevens van Strum, began to produce poetry in a variety of formats, from books (hard-bound and paperbacks) and slim pamphlets to large broadsides and modest keepsakes.

Hawley, born (1929) in Stockbridge, Wisconsin, home of Moby Dicksized sturgeon, learned to write poetry at the Universities of Wisconsin and Minnesota. He took an M.A. in English with Josephine Atkins, biographer of Edna St. Vincent Millay, and wrote a thesis on Ezra Pound. In the summer of 1956, he was a student at the debt-doomed Black Mountain College, just as it was about to fold its experimental tent in North Carolina's Appalachia despite the efforts of major poets on its staff, Charles Olson and Robert Duncan.

We owe Olson thanks, for he gave young Hawley three bits of advice, one of them negative and two positive. First, he told his disciple that his elegant and contemplative verse was strictly pour les oiseaux, only the blunt poet used language that is much too vulgar to appear in a family publication such as this one. On the other hand, he suggested, "Why don't you publish? Publish what you like [in poetry]." And, finally, he referred Robert to a book that changed his life. It was no volume of verse, but Bernard DeVoto's influential, seminal 1846: Year of Decision. The book eventually transformed a mere Midwesterner into the real thing, a Westerner.

Hawley drifted into o.p. bookselling via Jim Beane's shop in Asheville, North Carolina. He arrived in Berkeley in 1957 to work, first, as a book scout and then as an assistant in a bookstore. There, incredibly, bookseller Bill Farrell repeated Olson's earlier challenge—"Why don't you publish?" Bob shortly (1959) found his bookselling niche at the late, much-lamented Holmes Book Company in Oakland, where he learned Western Americana from Harold Holmes himself. At the same time, he was reading such poets as Jack Spicer, Mary Fabilli, Black

Mountain's Duncan, and, especially, U.C.'s Josephine Miles and William (Bill) Everson, a.k.a. Brother Antoninus. And thinking about publishing.

In 1964, Hawley and van Strum started Oyez Press by publishing a Michael McClure item. Their first book (1965) was a David Meltzer title. And they pioneered the printing of poetry in a series of broadsides. All but one were hand-set and printed by letterpress. Now Hawley encountered another powerful influence, like Miles and Everson (dit Antoninus), but this time in printing rather than in poetry. Although he used several printers—Robert Blesse of Santa Lucia Press, Don Gray, John McBride of Red Hill Press, even Alessandro Zanelli of Edizioni Ampersand in Verona—Graham Mackintosh remained his favorite. His faith in the Santa Barbara printer's talent was rewarded when the first book that they submitted to the AIGA, an Everson title, was selected as one of the Fifty Books of the Year. And each book that Bob sent to the Western Books competition won a place in the traveling exhibitions.

Oyez Press was an early success, even in the (unlikely) monetary sense. In those days, even libraries were well-heeled, and standing orders were a commonplace. The partners built up a strong mailing list of bookstores, college and university libraries, and collectors. For a year or two, the press published ten books, plus two or three give-away keepsakes.

But van Strum left Oyez around 1968, and Hawley had to run the whole shebang by himself, with only the help of his bookbinder wife, Dorothy, who helped him with design and distribution. The press's best-seller was one of *strasse*-poet Julia Vinograd's titles, *Berkeley Street Cannibals*. But Oyez was becoming inventory-rich and cash-poor. The press had forty to fifty titles in print, some of them in editions too large for a limited market. At the same time, the work became too burdensome even for an ex-artillery noncom. After working all day as a book-seller, Hawley had to come home to relax by reading mss., typing invoices, wrapping packages, seeing texts to the press, and sending dunning letters to deadbeats.

In any case, Hawley's love of antiquarian bookselling and Western Americana was overtaking his lust for poetry and fine printing. Although an English major, he had been a history minor in college. And he had grown up on (small caliber) Western lit., such as Clarence Mulford, his father's hand-me-down Zane Grey novels, some Jack London. After assisting in the rare books and Americana department at Holmes Book Company, Hawley took over that department in 1965 when Harold

Holmes died. Now he had to appraise, buy, and catalog books as well as sell them. There was just no adequate time for Ovez.

In November 1978 Robert opened his own shop, Ross Valley Books, in Albany, California. About a year ago, the Albanian bibliopole effected a change of venue to an Adeline suite in Berkeley.

Belatedly, recognition is coming to Oyez Press. Hawley recently wrote the author of this piece, "I don't think anything satisfies an editor/ publisher more than seeing his judgment vindicated, his taste enjoyed." He was referring to such happenings as the Fall 1995 issue of *Talisman*, which reprinted a dozen pages of selections from the early work of Mary Fabilli, published by Oyez thirty years ago. In the 1970s, Oyez published two keepsakes by Allen Say, translations of Japanese stories which he illustrated with his own drawings. Say, author of children's books, won the 1994 Caldecott Medal. The anti-war poem "Of Those Who Died" by Samuel Charters was published by Oyez in 1980. In 1995, the University of Alabama republished it in an anthology, *Poems* Against Violence. And we might add that the acquisition of the Oyez Press archive by The Book Club of California is another (modest) signal of belated recognition and appreciation of the importance of this very special Bay Area small press.

Poets represented in the material donated by Hawley include: Everson, Fabilli, Duncan, Meltzer, Charters, Lawrence McGaugh, Janine Canan, Sister Mary Norbert, Richard Korn, Philip Lamantia, Rusane Morrison, and Thomas Parkinson. Most Oyez writers have been Americans, but a Japanese, Shiga Naoya, is present in translation (and in prose, not verse, blank or otherwise), and one broadside is a poem by a Swede, Tomas Tranströmer, translated by Charters. There is an example of prose by Carol van Strum also, and art work by Ms. van Strum and Orlanda Brugnola. RICHARD H. DILLON

Les Lloyd Remembers

We are sad to report the death, on October 16, 1996, of Lester Lloyd. The master printer and typographer, who contributed so much to fine printing in the Bay Area, was eighty-eight and died at his Lafayette home. His long and distinguished career at Mackenzie & Harris, the venerable San Francisco type foundry, brought him nationwide recognition. He was active in local book circles and was a former Master of the Press of the Roxburghe Club of San Francisco, which named him an honorary member in 1995. For the more than twenty years of his retirement, he continued to participate in the world of printing and books, generously substituting for ailing workers and instructing apprentices as well as producing miniature books and other ephemera in his home printshop.

To signal a gift of his archives to The Club, Richard H. Dillon prepared the article which appears in this issue of QN-L. We regret very much that Les did not live to see this lively account of his career, and we are grateful to possess examples of work by this warm and gifted friend.

THE OCCASION of this reminiscence by Lester Lloyd of Lafayette's Moon Court is his donation of a collection of hobby printing ephemera to The Book Club.

Lloyd just missed being a Bastille Day baby. He was born on St. Swithin's Day, July 15, 1908. "That makes me eighty-eight years old" he says, "and I've had a good life." Good, indeed; great! When he was about eleven years old (he was in the sixth grade), young Lloyd received his first transfusion of printer's ink. Santa Claus gave the lad a \$13 or \$14 (2 1/2 x 4) toy press from the Emporium, plus a quarter-pound of black ink and a single font of type. "And did I have a good time that Christmas day!" he vividly remembers.

Lester Lloyd has continued to have a grand time for more than half a century. An expert professional typesetter, he became a skilled printer, a pressman, on the side. Eventually, with the help of his wife, Mildred, he turned to fine printing of ephemera as a hobby. But now, for about the last year or so, he has had to relegate his printing to younger members of his family. "If you think Estienne, in France, had a dynasty, he was an amateur! I've taught three sons to be printers, and they are good. Also four of their sons, as well as a granddaughter." Lester's print shop is nothing fancy, just his garage, but three presses and three hundred cases of type are parked in it: All of the equipment that a small letter-press shop would have.

Lloyd started his long career in the printing industry in nothing more grand than Berkeley's Edison Junior High School. "And did I run into trouble there!" The school district, in its infinite wisdom, required that each student take six months of a sampling of various kinds of "shop"—carpentry, machine shop, auto mechanics. "Maybe they thought that one of these would rub off on me," Lloyd observes. But the school also had a course in printing, which was exactly what the youngster wanted. "I knew my picas and points by then." After negotiations lasting for about two hours, the counselor agreed to waive the requirements in Lester's

case in order to give him time to advance himself in printing. Luckily, the print shop instructor was a good one. "He'd kick my tail every once in a while, but he told me to read anything related to our industry."

At Berkeley High School, young Lloyd ran into the same obstacle as at Edison. "The same ideas; mixed-up vocational schooling. They always put the incompetents in this diversified class. They were usually misfits....My IQ said I should go to college, but I didn't want to. I wanted to be a printer." After a couple more hours of wrangling with another counselor, Lloyd won this argument, too. His advisor developed a special course for him.

By the time that the young printer finished high school, he had worked in a half-dozen printing shops in the East Bay for two bits an hour. After graduation, he caught a ferry to take a look at the well-known Mackenzie and Harris typesetting shop in San Francisco. This plant, partnered by George M. Mackenzie and Carroll T. Harris, featured Monotypes and Intertypes rather than the more common Linotypes. Colonel Harris showed up and interviewed him, again for two hours, just like the high school and junior high counselors. Finally, Harris told the young man to report to the company's Oakland shop. (This East Bay branch lasted only one year.) "I didn't know I already had a job. And for fifty-three years I worked there [at Mackenzie & Harris, San Francisco]. And it was fun."

According to Lester, "The shop was the largest of its kind in the United States; typesetting and typefounding, no presses. And we were known throughout the States." Eventually, Lloyd taught other apprentices. He told them that they had five years of apprenticeship ahead of them and that then, after another five years, he would make them into printers by teaching them how to letter-space, line-space, etc. "In fact," he remembers, "three of them eventually became 'supers' in three of our biggest competitors' shops."

As a young man, Les Lloyd was ambition personified. Coming back from a merchant's lunch during his second year at Mackenzie & Harris, and fortified by a roast beef sandwich, apple pie, and coffee (35 cents), he was emboldened to say that he would have the man's job, someday. ("And he was the highest-paid printer on the Pacific Coast!") It was not the best of office politics, or even good manners, but it happened to be the (blunt) truth. Les did get the fellow's job, and his one-time 'super' later worked for him.

Another time, this same superintendent called Lloyd over and gestured to a couple of journeymen to join them. ("I'll bet he didn't even know their names.") He told the two men that he had a job coming in that would take about a week and that Apprentice Lloyd would tell them what to do. One of the journeymen asked, half-rhetorically, in disbelief, "Do you mean we'll take orders from a second-year apprentice?" Lloyd's superintendent just looked at them and asked where they would be working next day. "They got the message," Les remembers, "and we got along for the rest of the week."

After he retired, Les asked Andrew Hoyem if he could help him by setting a few pages. His pay? "No money; two drinks and lunch every day." The new retiree planned to spend only a couple of weeks with Andy, but he ended up working with the Norwegian-American for about a year.

Next, Helen Lee, of the new Mackenzie & Harris outfit, called to say that Lawton Kennedy needed some help because his pressman was sick. So Les went over to San Francisco again to offer his services. Again, no pay. Naturally, Kennedy took him up on his offer, pronto.

Les Lloyd still laughs in recalling that day when he got back from lunch to find Lawton himself feeding the press. "I said that he looked kind of tired and told him to move over, and I'd finish feeding his job for him. And he looked at me with astonishment and told me he didn't believe it. He said that I was just a typesetter. But he surely gave me a lot of jobs to feed.... And his printer got well, real quick, when he heard about it."

After joining the Craftsman's Club, Lloyd served as its president for two years. Once, the four hundred members voted for the twenty great printers of San Francisco, and Les was tickled to find his name put up alongside those of John Henry Nash and Robert and Ed Grabhorn. He became Printer's Devil and Master of the Press of the Roxburghe Club and, by getting women accepted as members and by inviting local speakers of expertise, and not just "visiting firemen," he upped attendance at meetings more than two-fold. Finally, he became a charter member of the Colophon Club.

The just-received Lester Lloyd Ephemera Collection consists of four-teen pieces of hand-set letterpress work. Most are Roxburghe Club (or joint Roxburghe-Zamorano Club) keepsakes, some of them sponsored by Helen Lee. *Duncan* (1988) is a paean-in-brief by Al Sperisen to the "Patriarch of Petaluma," bibliographer and fine binder Duncan Olmsted. *Goudy* (1988) is Col. Harris's account of his friendship with type-designer Frederic W. Goudy. John Gould's *Gookies* (1992) is the tale of a \$250 Neiman-Marcus recipe for Maine shore-dinner sugar cookies.

To Squeeze or Not to Squeeze (1962) is a reprinting of Goudy's little essay. George Waters Introduced Ansel Adams (1977) reproduces the introduction of the great photographer at a Roxburghe meeting, F.W.G. (1984) consists of Goudy's last words on type design. Mark Twain (1984) is Sam Clemens' account of his boyhood apprenticeship as a printer in the 1850s.

There are three smaller-sized volumes, one of them exactly—deliberately—the size of Amadeo Tommasini's Christmas keepsakes. It is XXX Plus One, a listing of Tommy's thirty booklets and a roster of the fifty-six owners of full (and almost-full) sets. (Lloyd was responsible for the typography of many of Tommy's publications.) Familiar to many Book Club members will be the Combined Roster of the Roxburghe and Zamorano Clubs, sized to fit a bibliophile's wallet. There is one small, undated broadside, Baron Rothschild's Maxims, and a genuine miniature book, the (1957) Gettysburg Address. It is the size of a postage stamp, and not a commemorative one, at that, "produced in its entirety by Mildred and Lester Lloyd at their Red Squirrel Press, Lafayette, California."

RICHARD H. DILLON

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